



**NATIONAL MUSEUM  
OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE**  
1100 Spaatz Street  
Wright-Patterson AFB OH 45433-7102



**NATIONAL MUSEUM  
OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE**

# **WINGS & THINGS**

*2005 Guest Lecture Series*

The National Museum  
of the United States Air Force  
gratefully acknowledges the  
Air Force Museum Foundation  
for the 2005 Lecture Series.



For additional information or special seating arrangements, please contact the Special Events Division at (937) 255-3286, Ext. 312, or NMUSAF/MUS, 1100 Spaatz Street, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio 45433-7102.

Sign interpretation for the hearing impaired will be provided during the lecture series.

Videotapes of past lectures are available on loan through the museum's Education Division. To receive a catalog, please contact the Education Division at (937) 255-3286, Ext. 463, or NMUSAF/MUT, 1100 Spaatz Street, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio 45433-7102.

The lectures and films are directed to an adult audience and may contain visual material or language that may be considered inappropriate for young viewers. The museum strongly suggests that the videotapes be previewed prior to classroom viewing.

*Museum  
doors open  
at 6:30 p.m.*

*Lecture  
presentation  
begins  
at 7:30 p.m.*

*Admission  
is free*



**January  
2005**



*January 20*

*Lt. Col.  
Evan  
Thomas*

*"Readying  
the Raptor  
for War"*

Every new aircraft poses new challenges during developmental flight test, and the F/A-22 Raptor has been no exception. From stealth to supercruise performance, and unmatched agility to integrated avionics, the task of proving the Raptor's combat capabilities has been daunting, yet exciting.

Lt. Col. Evan Thomas will discuss the complexities of flight test for the Air Force's newest and most capable fighter, accompanied by the historical foundations of flight test at the Air Force Flight Test Center that made this development possible.

Lt. Col. Thomas was raised in Sherman Oaks, Calif., and graduated from North Hollywood High School in 1982. He entered the U.S. Air Force Academy and was commissioned a second lieutenant in May 1986.

He attended Undergraduate Pilot Training at Williams Air Force Base, Ariz., and graduated as a Distinguished Graduate in 1987. He married his high school sweetheart, Natalie, and introduced her to Air Force life while attending Fighter Lead-in training at Holloman Air Force Base, N.M. Lt. Col. Thomas attended F-16 training at MacDill Air Force Base and was assigned to the 496th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Hahn Air Base, Germany. During an eventful tour, he qualified as a flight lead in the most heavily tasked wing in USAF Europe and witnessed the collapse of the Warsaw Pact. In December 1990 he was assigned to the 10th Tactical Fighter Squadron and deployed in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert

Storm. His first child, Ryan, was born while he was otherwise engaged flying a combat mission over Iraq.

In July 1991 Lt. Col. Thomas was assigned as an active-duty augmentee to the 178th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, North Dakota Air National Guard, Fargo, N.D. There, he upgraded to Instructor Pilot in the ADF-16 and was happily present for the birth of his second child, Alexander. He topped off the assignment as a Flight Commander and pilot on the Top Team during the 1994 William Tell Air-to-Air Weapons Meet. Next, Lt. Col. Thomas was selected to attend the Empire Test Pilots School, United Kingdom, and graduated in December 1995. He returned to an assignment at the 416th Flight Test Squadron, Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. From 1996 to 1999, he served as F-16 test pilot, chief pilot for Block 50 programs, Flight Commander, and Assistant Operations Officer. During this time, he earned a master's degree in mechanical engineering from California State University, Fresno.

In July 1999 Lt. Col. Thomas attended Air Command and Staff College, where he was selected as a Distinguished Graduate. His next assignment was to the F/A-22 System Program Office, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, where he served as Test Program Manager. In July 2002 he returned to Edwards as Operations Officer, 416th Flight Test Squadron.

Lt. Col. Thomas has commanded the 411th Flight Test Squadron at Edwards since June 2003. He serves as a test pilot for the F/A-22 and is responsible for the developmental test operations of the F/A-22 Combined Test Force. Lt. Col. Thomas is a Command Pilot with more than 2,900 flight hours in over 25 different aircraft.

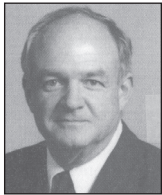


*Lt. Col. Evan  
Thomas  
stands in front  
of an F/A-22  
Raptor, the  
Air Force's  
newest  
fighter.*





**February  
2005**



© Don Russell

*February 24*

*Mr. Thomas  
Reed*

*“An Insider’s  
History  
of the  
Cold War”*

The major participants in the Cold War were armed with thousands of nuclear weapons, yet those weapons were never used. Over and over, as crises escalated to visible or unknown brinks, honorable men and women on both sides kept their cool and did what was right — as they saw it — to keep us away from the nuclear abyss.

Mr. Thomas Reed, a former Secretary of the Air Force, served as Director of Reconnaissance, a Special Assistant to President Ronald Reagan for national security policy and a consultant to the director of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, where much of the United States’ nuclear weapons research takes place.

Mr. Reed graduated first in his class from Cornell University with an engineering degree and an ROTC commission into the U.S. Air Force. He began his professional career at the Air Force Ballistic Missile Division in Los Angeles in the 1950s. He received his master’s degree from the University of Southern California and moved on to Lawrence Livermore, where he designed two thermo-nuclear devices fired in the Dominic test series in the Pacific in 1962.

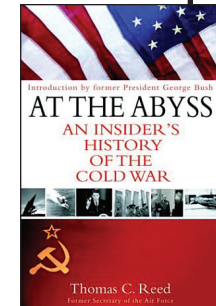
Following his time at Livermore, Mr. Reed ran a high-tech company that made superconductors. He developed an interest in politics, and in 1966, he became the northern California chairman of Reagan’s first gubernatorial race. He served as chief of personnel during the governor’s first administration and was state-wide chairman and campaign director

for Gov. Reagan’s re-election campaign in the 1970s. In 1973, Mr. Reed was recruited to manage intelligence projects at the Pentagon, where he later became director of information to integrate the developing worldwide military command system and Secretary of the Air Force. During the Reagan administration, Mr. Reed served as the president’s Special Assistant for national security policy. His principle project there was the design of a national security policy, signed off by the president as National Security Decision Directive 32, which was used as the roadmap for prevailing in the Cold War.

Mr. Reed left Washington, D.C., in 1983 and returned to managing his superconductor business. He continues advising on national security issues to this day. Throughout the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, he served as consultant to Gen. Colin Powell, then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Mr. Reed also presided over the Policy Committee of the Joint Strategic Planning Staff to help plan the START I treaty announced in June 1992 by Presidents Bush and Yeltsin.

Mr. Reed’s first book, *At the Abyss: An Insider’s History of the Cold War*, shares 30 tales of the men and women of both sides who fought and ended the Cold War without a nuclear shot being fired.

Today, Mr. Reed lives north of San Francisco with his wife, Kay.



*Mr. Thomas  
Reed, former  
Secretary of  
the Air Force,  
published  
At the  
Abyss: An  
Insider’s  
History of the  
Cold War  
in 2004.*



## March 2005

March 17

Maj. Gen.  
(Ret.) Larry  
Garrison

Mr. Cargill  
Hall

Col. (Ret.)  
Laverne  
Griffin

Col. (Ret.)  
Ruffian  
Gray

Col. (Ret.)  
Howard  
Peckham

Mr. Jerry  
Depew

*"The RF-86  
in the Cold  
War, Korea  
and After"*

Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Larry Garrison and five others will discuss the RF-86. A keynote address, PowerPoint presentation and panel discussion will be part of the evening's events.

**Maj. Gen. Garrison** retired from the Air Force in 1987. A command pilot with more than 4,800 flying hours, he received awards such as the Distinguished Service Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross. Maj. Gen. Garrison flew several reconnaissance aircraft, including the RF-80, RF-84, RF-86 and RF-101. During the war in Southeast Asia, he flew 198 combat missions (66 over North Vietnam).

**Mr. Cargill Hall**, the Chief Historian Emeritus of the National Reconnaissance Office in Washington, D.C., is a published authority on aircraft and space programs. He is a member of the International Institute of Space Law and the International Academy of Astronautics. Mr. Hall also contributes to *Air & Space Smithsonian* and has numerous studies, publications and projects.

**Col. (Ret.) Laverne Griffin** entered the U.S. Air Force in 1946 and completed pilot training in 1948. Almost all of his operational aircraft flying was in reconnaissance duties. In 1953, as Operations Officer for the 15th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron in Korea, he flew combat missions in the RF-80 and RF-86. On the last day of the war, he flew the deepest penetration of Manchuria in a single-engine aircraft and experienced total oxygen failure at 47,000 feet. Using his emergency oxygen bottle for breathing, he completed the flight successfully. After the war, he led the RF-86 pilots of the 15th TRS on three deep penetration missions into China and Russia. He later served as a development engineer for reconnaissance systems with Air Force Systems Command, and

as Deputy Commander for Operations and Wing Commander of the 10th Reconnaissance Wing in the United Kingdom.

**Col. (Ret.) Ruffian Gray** completed pilot training in 1942 and served in the Southwest Pacific flying the F-5, the photo reconnaissance version of the P-38. He commanded the 15th TRS during the Korean War and was instrumental in the modification of the F-86 fighter into a reconnaissance aircraft. Later, he commanded the 18th TRS and the 302nd Tactical Squadron in England. Col.

Gray was an honor graduate of the National War College and completed his Air Force career as Executive Officer for the Vice Chief of Staff of the USAF.

**Col. (Ret.) Howard Peckham** was a 1951 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy. He completed pilot training in 1952 and was assigned to the 15th TRS in Korea after qualifying to fly the F-86. He flew several highly classified missions in North Korea, China and Manchuria. After returning to the United States, he flew the RB-57 and the RF-84F. For the remainder of his career, he was involved in many Air Force Special Projects, including missile test and ranges, assignments in Air Force Systems Command, the Pentagon and HQ 7th Air Force in Vietnam.

**Mr. Jerry Depew** graduated from pilot training in 1953 and flew the RF-80 and RF-86 aircraft with the 15th TRS in Korea and Japan. As a young lieutenant, he participated in and led more classified reconnaissance missions in the RF-86 during the post-Korean War period over North Korea, China and the USSR than any other Air Force pilot. Mr. Depew left the Air Force in 1956 and completed a successful career with Toyota Motor Sales USA Inc.



*This aircrew on the first RF-86 post Korean War mission targeted Vladivostok, airfields and port facilities. Pictured (from left) are 1Lt. Sam Dickens, 1Lt. Pete Garrison, Capt. Laverne Griffin, Maj. George Saylor, 1Lt. Bill Bissett and 2Lt. Larry Garrison.*



## Col. (Ret.) Leo Thorsness' presentation will focus on ethics and doing what is right.

He will use examples from his time in "Wild Weasel" combat missions in Vietnam and his six years as a prisoner of war.

**April 2005**



April 27

Col.  
(Ret.) Leo  
Thorsness

*"Ethics and Leadership in Tough Times"*

Col. Thorsness enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in January 1951. He graduated from 54-G Aviation Cadets, served with Strategic Air Command and finally as a Tactical Air Command fighter pilot, flying F-84s, F-100s and F-105s and accumulating nearly 5,000 hours flying time.

During his time with the 357th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Col. Thorsness flew 92 1/2 Wild Weasel missions over North Vietnam. He was shot down in April 1967 and became a prisoner of war until his release in 1973. Col. Thorsness was awarded a Medal of Honor for a Wild Weasel mission he flew 11 days before he was shot down.

After serving with the Air Force, Col. Thorsness worked at Litton Corporate headquarters in Beverly Hills for six years, and in 1986, he and his wife, Gaylee, moved to Seattle, where he served as a state senator from 1988 to 1992.

In 1993, Col. Thorsness and his wife built a waterfront home in Indianola, Washington, and raised oysters and steamer clams and harvested Dungeness crabs.

The couple moved to Alexandria, Virginia, in 1998

and in 2000, they relocated to Saddle Brooke, Arizona. Gaylee (for the third time) confirms this is their "last home."

Today, Col. Thorsness is vice chairman of the Medal of Honor Foundation. He often speaks on ethics and "doing what's right."



(top) Col. (Ret.) Leo Thorsness at Takli in 1967.



(middle) Col. Thorsness was a prisoner of war for six years. This photo was taken in October 1967.



(bottom) Col. Thorsness received the Medal of Honor for a Wild Weasel mission he flew 11 days before being shot down. In this 2001 photograph, he is pictured with four other Medal of Honor recipients. From left to right are Bernard Fisher, Joe M. Jackson, George E. "Bud" Day, Leo K. Thorsness and James P. Fleming.





**May  
2005**



*May 19*

*Col. (Ret.)  
Charles  
DeBellevue*

*"The Air  
War In and  
Around the  
Hanoi Area"*

## Col. (Ret.) Charles DeBellevue, the leading ace from the war in Southeast Asia, will speak about the air war in and around the Hanoi area.

Col. DeBellevue is a command pilot with 3,000 flying hours (550 in combat). His military decorations include the Air Force Cross, three Silver Stars, three Legions of Merit, six Distinguished Flying Crosses, three Meritorious Service Medals, 18 Air Medals, two Air Force Commendation Medals and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm.

Born in 1945 in New Orleans, Louisiana, he earned a bachelor's degree in physics from the University of Southwestern Louisiana in 1968 and master's degree in business administration from Chapman College in 1979. He also graduated from Squadron Officer School, Armed Forces Staff College and the Air Force and Army War Colleges.

Col. DeBellevue attended undergraduate navigator training at Mather AFB, California, graduating in 1969. He attended F-4 combat crew training at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, and was assigned as a weapons system officer with the 335th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Seymour-Johnson AFB, North Carolina, in February 1970. In October 1971, he was assigned to the famed "Triple Nickel," the 555th TFS, Udon Royal Thai AFB, Thailand, where he completed 220 missions (96 over North Vietnam). He is credited with the destruction of six North Vietnamese jet fighters in aerial combat — four MiG-21s and two MiG-19s — and is the leading ace from the war in Southeast Asia. He received the MacKay trophy for the most notable aerial achievement in 1972 and received the Veterans of Foreign Wars National Armed Forces Award that same year.

Col. DeBellevue also was assigned to the 550th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron at Luke AFB, Arizona and the 8th TFS, Holloman AFB, New Mexico, and Elmendorf AFB, Alaska. He was an F-4 instructor pilot and assistant operations officer with the 43rd TFS and a fighter duty officer and Command Standardization Evaluation Flight Examiner for the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, Headquarters, Alaskan Air Command.

In 1980, Col. DeBellevue moved to HQ USAF as an air staff officer in the Tactical Fighter Requirements Division of AF/RD. He returned to Seymour-Johnson AFB in 1982 to serve as assistant operations officer, 335th TFS, chief of maintenance training and assistant deputy commander for operations, 4th TFW.

Later, Col. DeBellevue was assigned to HQ 5th Air Force at Yokota Air Base, Japan, as chief of staff. In 1989, he assumed command of the 432nd Combat Support Group, Misawa Air Base, Japan, and in 1991, he moved to Edwards AFB, California, where is served as chief of staff of the Air Force Flight Test Center and later as commander of the 95th Air Base Wing. In 1994, Col. and Mrs. DeBellevue received the Gen. and Mrs. Jerome F. O'Malley Award, given to the top wing commander and spouse in Air Force Materiel Command.

In 1995, Col. DeBellevue assumed control of the AFROTC Detachment 440 at the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he served until his retirement in February 1998. He was the last American ace on active duty. After his retirement, he was a program manager for a firm producing electronic gear for the U.S. Navy and NASA, and currently, he is director of business development for DEL-JEN Inc., a base operations and logistics services support company.



*With six  
victories, Col.  
(Ret.) Charles  
Debellevue  
(left) was the  
USAF's  
top ace in  
Vietnam.*



September  
2005



Rob Curtis/Air Force Times

September 14

Mr. Robert  
Dorr

"American  
Helicopters  
in Combat"

Not many Americans know that the first helicopter combat mission was flown in Burma in 1944 — by an American.

Helicopters have been at the center of the action in U.S. conflicts ever since, including fighting in 2003 when Marines in AH-1W Cobras battled Iraqi troops and tanks.

Mr. Robert Dorr's presentation will cover the history of American helicopter pilots in combat — the early days in World War II and Korea, including combat sorties in the frail and short-ranged H-5, the emergence of the helicopter as a primary weapon in Vietnam, and later rotary wing operations in the Persian Gulf and the Balkans. Mr. Dorr interviewed 71 helicopter combat veterans and visited several helicopter units. Now, he'll tell the history of American helicopters in battle.

Mr. Dorr is an author on military issues and a retired senior American diplomat.

Mr. Dorr spent 24 years serving at American embassies abroad as a Foreign Service officer with the Department of State. He speaks Korean and Japanese and has held senior positions in Washington after tours of duty in Madagascar, Korea, Japan, Liberia, Sweden and England. He served in the U.S. Air Force in Korea from 1957 to 1960.

Since retiring from diplomatic service, Mr. Dorr has been an author. He was in Panama during Operation Just Cause and in Saudi Arabia during Desert Shield;

he has recently been in Somalia and Bosnia. In addition to writing about the U.S. Armed Forces in the 1990s, Mr. Dorr follows events in North Korea and writes about Korean issues today as well as the Korean War.

Mr. Dorr has written 60 books, including *Desert Shield* and *Air War Hanoi*, hundreds of newspaper articles and thousands of magazine articles on international affairs, military issues, the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam War. He writes the weekly Air Force column for *Air Force Times* newspaper and the monthly "Washington Watch" feature for *Aerospace America*. He is an editor of *Air Power History* and Washington correspondent for *World Air Power Journal*.

In addition to his writing, Mr. Dorr often speaks to community groups, the service academies, universities, church, civic and veterans' groups, on world affairs and the armed forces.

Mr. Dorr lives in Oakton, Virginia, with his wife and two sons.



Helicopters, like this Bell UH-1P on display at the museum, have played an important role in the U.S. military.





October  
2005



October 19

Maj.  
(Ret.) Ed  
Rasimus

"Rolling  
Thunder to  
Linebacker"

Maj. (Ret.) Ed Rasimus, fighter  
pilot and author of *When  
Thunder Rolled* and *Phantom*

*Flights, Bangkok Nights* will talk  
about the air war over North Vietnam  
from the early days of escalation  
to the end game of Linebacker that  
brought the release of U.S. prisoners  
of war and the end to hostilities. Did  
we win, lose or was it a draw?

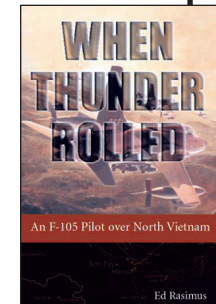
In his two books, Maj. Rasimus carries the reader  
into the cockpit of the F-105 and the F-4E as  
he challenges the most intense defenses ever  
encountered in the history of aerial warfare. Now,  
he will share his memories as he talks about the war  
from his perspective as a political science instructor.  
Insightful, cynical, occasionally bitter, usually  
humorous and always entertaining, Maj. Rasimus'  
view of the war will leave you thinking about it from  
a different angle.

Maj. Rasimus' latest book is an autobiography of his  
Air Force career. There was never a doubt that Maj.  
Rasimus wanted to become an Air Force fighter pilot.  
Nobody told him about the high probability of dying  
in combat. It was a peaceful time, without a major  
war going on, and Maj. Rasimus went about fulfilling  
his dream. But this wasn't a day job, living a normal  
home life and basking in the glamour of driving a  
supersonic toy around the countryside. Instead, it  
suddenly became very real, with Maj. Rasimus placed  
at the pointy end of the spear of national policy and  
fighting for his life in a war. He was flying an F-105  
Thunderchief into the heart of the most heavily

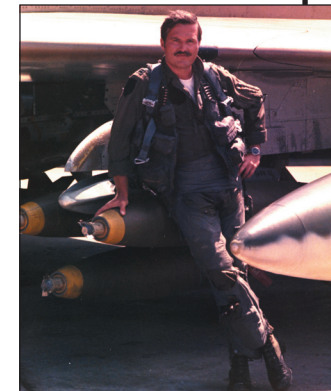
defended area in the history of aerial warfare, tasked  
to fly 100 missions over North Korea when three out  
of every five pilots who attempted it would be killed  
or captured.

When it was all over, Maj. Rasimus came away  
from the war with more than 250 combat missions,  
which were flown in the fastest, most  
awesome jets of the period — the F-105  
Thunderchief and F-4 Phantom. In the  
process, he earned the Silver Star, the  
Distinguished Flying Cross five times,  
the Air Medal with 19 Oak Clusters and  
an array of battle ribbons and awards.

After leaving the Air Force,  
Maj. Rasimus worked for a  
major aerospace contractor  
on the development of  
the next generation of  
tactical aircraft. He also  
has written extensively for  
computer magazines with  
a weekly column in several  
publications and hundreds of  
software reviews. Currently,  
he is retired and living in  
Colorado Springs, Colorado,  
where he teaches political  
science at the local college.  
He recently finished *Phantom Nights, Bangkok  
Flights*, the sequel to *When Thunder Rolled* that  
tells the story of his F-4 experiences during the  
Linebacker campaigns that ended U.S. involvement  
in Vietnam.



(top) Maj.  
(Ret.) Ed  
Rasimus'  
book, *When  
Thunder  
Rolled: An  
F-105 Pilot  
Over North  
Vietnam*,  
was published  
in 2003.  
(bottom) Maj.  
Rasimus poses  
next to an F-4  
in 1972. In his  
new book, he  
shares his F-4  
experiences  
with readers.





**November  
2005**



*November 17*

*Mrs. Florene  
Miller  
Watson*

*"Early  
Women Pilots  
in World  
War II in  
the Ferrying  
Division"*

During World War II, the Air Corps searched for women with 500 hours of flying time to become aircraft ferrying pilots — double the standard of men who only needed 250 hours to qualify. Mrs. Florene Miller Watson was one of only 25 women who qualified for the original Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron, later known as the Women Air Force Service Pilots, or WASP.

By age 8, Mrs. Watson was fascinated with airplanes, and by age 19, she had completed flight school. She received her instructor's rating and was teaching men to fly in the War Training Program in Texas when World War II began. She turned 21 the day the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, and soon after, she and her younger brother volunteered for service in the Air Corps.

In January 1943, Mrs. Watson was made Commanding Officer over the WAFS-WASPs stationed at Love Field, Texas. In 1944, she served as an experimental military airline pilot and also tested radar equipment before it was used overseas. By the time WWII was over, Mrs. Watson had flown every type of training, cargo, fighter and twin- and four-engine bomber used by the Air Corps.

Considered civilians with officer's status, Mrs. Watson and other women operated under extreme pressure to succeed. Some 1,000 women pilots were trained by the military for service in the Training and Ferrying Commands. Thirty-eight were killed during wartime service. It took 33 years for

them to be recognized by Congress as serving as military officers. In 1992, Mrs. Watson traveled to Washington, D.C., to receive an award recognizing the Women's Air Force Service Pilots.

Mrs. Watson has had many special honors, including being assigned to Bob Hope's tour group as a public relations representative when the comedian visited Love Field in 1943. She was a special guest of Gen. Paul Tibbets at the Iwo Jima Reunion in Wichita Falls, Texas, in 1988. As WASP Chaplain, she was on the program with then-Attorney General Janet Reno in 1997 to dedicate a bronze statue representing the WASPs in the Air Force Academy's Honor Court. In June 2001, she and 15 male war heroes were honored at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, as Eagles in a prestigious "Gathering of Eagles" celebration. She was again honored as an Eagle in 2002 and 2003. In August 2003, Mrs. Watson's hometown, Big Lake, Texas, renamed its airport after her, and in November 2003, she and 24 male war heroes were honored by the Air Force at its Centennial of Flight celebration.

Mrs. Watson has been featured in several newspapers, magazines and books as well as a number of television interviews and aviation programs, plus video and audio histories used by university archive departments and aviation museums. She was featured in the nationally-broadcast TV documentary *Women of Courage*, which explained the role of women pilots during WWII. She makes frequent presentations to military bases, civic, youth and veterans' groups.

Mrs. Watson and her husband, Chris, reside in Borger, Texas. They have two daughters and four grandchildren.



*(top) Mrs.  
Florene Miller  
Watson at the  
age of 21 as a  
member of the  
2nd Ferrying  
Group in  
Wilmington,  
Delaware.  
(bottom)  
Mrs. Watson,  
age 82, at  
the Slayton  
(Lubbock)  
Texas Air  
Show in May  
2003.*

